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Press release: Eyre Highway delay

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PRESS RELEASE FROM THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN.

Eyre Highway Delay.

23.6.72

CANBERRA-- The South Australian Premier, Mr. Dunstan, said today he was extremely disappointed by the Commonwealth Government's continued refusal to expedite sealing of the Eyre Highway.

He sought Commonwealth support for this at today's Premiers' conference. It was the tenth such request since 1967.

"The Prime Minister still will not accept that the Eyre Highway is a road of national importance from the points of view of trade, tourism and defence.

"The remaining usealed section to the Western Australia border is also a serious safety hazard", Mr. Dunstan said.

The Commonwealth had said South Australia's representations were still under consideration.

"This is not good enough. Just how much time do they want?"

The State Government believed the remaining leg should be sealed over the next four to five years.

A third of the cost of \$7.5 million could be met out of current Highways Department funds. The State Government had offered to meet another third by temporary advances from funds allocated to another statutory authority subject to repayment out of Highways Department funds over a period after the project is completed. The Commonwealth has been asked for the remaining third.

The Premier said that, despite the Federal Government's continuing inaction, the work would go ahead forthwith.

Money will be advanced temporarily from funds held for other purposes in the hope and expectation that the Commonwealth will eventually assist in recouping those ~~in~~ advances.

"South Australia cannot wait any longer. The Government feels it must take the calculated risk of ultimate Commonwealth support".

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